

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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R 110800Z NOV 75X

FM AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7581

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 7250

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS PINT, SHUM, TW

SUBJECT: ARREST OF LEGISLATIVE YUAN CANDIDATE PAI YA-TSAN

1. ON NOVEMBER 10 PAI SU-CHIAO (4101/4790/1293) CALLED ON EMBOFF TO ASK THAT THE EMBASSY INTERVENE WITH THE GROC ON BEHALF OF HER OLDER BROTHER, PAI YA-TSAN (4101/7161/3605), INDEPENDENT CANDIDATE FOR THE DECEMBER 20 LEGISLATIVE YUAN ELECTIONS, WHO WAS ARRESTED ON OCTOBER 23 ALLEGEDLY BECAUSE OF THE CAMPAIGN LEAFLET HE WAS CIRCULATING. THE LEAFLET CONTAINED 29 QUESTIONS WHICH INTER ALIA REQUESTED PREMIER CHIANG CHING-KUO TO REVEAL HIS FINANCIAL POSITION AND RESIGN BECAUSE OF ROC DIPLOMATIC SETBACKS, CALLED FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH THE USSR AND DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE PRC, AND SUGGESTED THAT THE PREMIER ALLOW PENG MING-MIN (1756/2494/2404) AND "OTHER TAIWAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT ELEMENTS" TO ESTABLISH "AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED GOVERNMENT."

2. MISS PAI INFORMED EMBOFF THAT HER FAMILY HAD RECEIVED NOTIFICATION THAT PAI YA-TSAN WOULD STAND TRIAL FOR HIS ACTION. (PAI HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN DETAINED FOR 120 DAYS IN 1971, REPORTEDLY ON THE CHARGE OF SEDITION.) ACCORDING TO CONFIDENTIAL

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MISS PAI, HER SECOND BROTHER PAI CHIH-PIN (4101/2784/1755)

HAS ALSO BEEN DETAINED FOR ASSISTING HIS OLDER BROTHER IN WRITING THE LEAFLET.

3. EMBUSY UNDERSTANDS FROM ANOTHER SOURCE THAT IN ADDITION TO PAI YA-TSAN, SOME SEVEN OTHERS WERE DETAINED IN CONNECTION WITH THE PRINTING AND CIRCULATION OF THE LEFLET.

4. IN RESPONSE TO MISS PAI'S REQUEST THAT THE EMBASSY INTERVENE WITH GROC AUTHORITIES TO ASSIST HER BROTHER, EMBOFF INFORMED HER THAT SINCE USG POLICY WAS NOT TO INTERVENE IN THE DOMESTIC AFFAIRS OF ANOTHER COUNTRY AND THAT SINCE PAI'S ARREST WAS CLEARLY A DOMESTIC MATTER, THE EMBASSY WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO ASSIST HER BROTHER. MISS PAI THEN SAID THAT SHE MIGHT SEEK THE ASSISTANCE OF FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS IN TAIPEI TO PUBLICIZE HER BROTHER'S PLIGHT.

5. COMMENT: PAI YA-TSAN HAD EARLIER GIVEN EMBOFF A COPY OF HIS LEAFLET AND DISCUSSED HIS PLATFORM, WHICH AT THE TIME, IN EMBASSY'S VIEW, SEEMED LIKELY TO GET PAI INTO POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES (SEE PAI/DE WILDE MEMCON OF OCTOBER 23). HIS ARREST SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE TO OPPOSITIONISTS BECAUSE SOME OF THE QUESTIONS RAISED IN HIS CAMPAIGN LEAFLET STRIKE DIRECTLY AT CORNERSTONES OF GROC DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL POLICY. THEREFORE, WHILE THE GROC'S PROMPT ARREST OF PAI MAY WELL BE A WARNING TO OTHER INDEPENDENTS THAT THEY SHOULD EXERCISE CAUTION DURING THE LEGISLATIVE YUAN CAMPAIGN, HIS ARREST DOES NOT IN ITSELF INDICATE ANY TOUGHENING OF THE GROC'S POLICY TOWARDS OPPOSITION ACTIVITY OR POLITICAL DISSENT. NOT SURPRISINGLY, THERE HAS BEEN NO PUBLICITY LOCALLY ABOUT PAI'S ARREST.

6. FYI: EMBOFF WHO HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH PAI IN THE PAST DOES NOT VIEW HIM AS A MAN OF MUCH STANDING IN INDEPENDENT CIRCLES. PRIOR TO HIS ARREST, HIS GREATEST CLAIM TO STANDING IN THOSE CIRCLES WAS THAT HE WAS A CAMPAIGN ASSISTANT TO THE WIDELY DISCREDITED WEI YI-MIN (HENRY WEI) IN HIS ABORTIVE 1973 TAIPEI CITY COUNCIL CAMPAIGN. THE EMBASSY ALSO UNDERSTANDS THAT SOME POLITICALLY-CONSCIOUS TAIWANESE EVEN REGARD PAI AS A POSSIBLE INFORMER, AN IMPRESSION WHICH WOULD PRESUMABLY BE DISPELLED BY A STIFF SENTENCE.
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